

MINUTES

MONTANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES 57th LEGISLATURE - REGULAR SESSION COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Call to Order: By **VICE CHAIRMAN BOB LAWSON**, on January 29, 2001
at 3:12 P.M., in Room 137B Capitol.

ROLL CALL

Members Present:

Rep. Gay Ann Masolo, Chairman (R)
Rep. Kathleen Galvin-Halcro, Vice Chairman (D)
Rep. Bob Lawson, Vice Chairman (R)
Rep. Joan Andersen (R)
Rep. Norma Bixby (D)
Rep. Gary Branae (D)
Rep. Nancy Fritz (D)
Rep. Verdell Jackson (R)
Rep. Hal Jacobson (D)
Rep. Larry Lehman (R)
Rep. Jeff Mangan (D)
Rep. Joe McKenney (R)
Rep. John Musgrove (D)
Rep. Alan Olson (R)
Rep. Ken Peterson (R)
Rep. Butch Waddill (R)
Rep. Allan Walters (R)
Rep. Merlin Wolery (R)

Members Excused: None.

Members Absent: None.

Staff Present: Connie Erickson, Legislative Branch
Nina Roatch, Committee Secretary

Please Note: These are summary minutes. Testimony and
discussion are paraphrased and condensed.

Committee Business Summary:

Hearing(s) & Date(s) Posted: HB 140, 1/17/2001; HB 297,
1/17/2001
Executive Action: HB 272, as Amended

HEARING ON HB 297

Sponsor: REPRESENTATIVE HOLLY RASER, HD 70, Missoula

Proponents: Don Robson, Dean of Education,

University of Montana

Erik Burke, MEA-MFT

Doug Shenkle

Bob Vogel, MSBA, SAM, MREA

Ginni McHugh, Student Teachers

Wayne Buchanan, BPE

Bill Cooper, OPI

**Gregg Wiesenstine, Dean of the College of Education,
Health and Human Development at**

Montana State University-Bozeman

Melodee Smith-Burreson, Student Teachers

Opponents: None

Informational: Joyce Scott, OCHE

Opening Statement by Sponsor:

REPRESENTATIVE HOLLY RASER, HD, 70, Missoula, said in the State of the State address, Governor Martz spoke of teaching as a noble profession and that we must work to recruit and retain Montana teachers. Montana teachers are some of the finest in the country, evidenced by many measures of academic excellence and high graduation rates. One important reason for a teacher's excellence has to do, not only with the fine schools of education in the Montana University System, but the excellent mentoring prospective teachers receive at the hands of Montana's master teachers. The role of the supervising teacher is crucial in the development of a beginning teacher. Supervisors spend countless hours mentoring, guiding and evaluating these students. The pay has remained unchanged since 1957. The master teacher who guided her career 21 years ago, received \$100 for her efforts. This is the same amount a master teacher will receive today. As we are all aware, \$100 doesn't go quite as far today as it did in 1980. For this reason, more and more teachers are unwilling to devote the time and energy it takes to work with a young teacher for that small amount of pay. This is causing a crisis in schools of education across the state. Placement directors are scrambling, even after the semester has begun, to find enough supervising teachers. They must rely on using inexperienced teachers to act as mentors or to find replacements in schools out of state. Two problems result from these action: Inexperienced mentors don't provide the necessary guidance and many beginning teachers will quit after a year or two of teaching. Also, student teachers who perform their practice teaching out of state, generally accept a teaching position out of state. This bill is a small simple attempt to address the problem of providing enough experienced master teachers to train our Montana graduates by offering an increase in the stipend pay to supervising teachers from the

current \$100 to \$500. It is still a relatively small amount to pay for the invaluable job of guiding the teachers of tomorrow, but it is a step towards providing incentives to our master teachers. This stipend is to be funded with a \$700,000 appropriation to the university system. This amount is based on the current number of 700 prospective teachers in need of placement every year. As those in education are ever concerned with unfunded mandates, there is language in this bill that addresses this issue. She directed the committee to look at page one, line 20, which reads, "If the appropriation for funding the stipend for supervising teachers is less than the total amount for which supervising teachers qualify, the Board of Regents shall prorate the appropriation to the supervising teachers in a manner that provides the same amount for each supervising teacher." This means if there were more than 700 prospective teachers to be placed, the amount appropriated will be divided equally among the supervising teachers. She presented written testimony from **Robin Zeal, 2001 Montana Teacher of the Year, January 26, 2001. EXHIBIT (edh23a01)** She also presented written testimony from **Benilda Delgado, Whitefish, Montana. EXHIBIT (edh23a02)**

Proponents' Testimony:

Don Robson, Dean of the School of Education at The University of Montana-Missoula said he was present to speak in favor of the bill. He presented written testimony. **EXHIBIT (edh23a03)**

Erik Burke, MEA-MFT said they think this is a good bill and it addresses an issue which has been talked about for a long time in Montana. In 1957 the Board of Regents decided on a compensation of \$100 per supervising teacher. Since 1957, Montana supervising teachers have received the same compensation. It is time to take into consideration what the supervising teacher does, not only for the student teachers that they have, but for the students who will have those teachers in their classrooms. Supervising teachers takes time to train, prepare, mentor, supervise, evaluate and encourage student teachers. Without them our state stands to lose the quality training that takes place and helps to make Montana teachers some of the best in the nation. The bill is long overdue and they urge that the bill be given a do pass.

Doug Shenkle said he is a teacher and has been for thirty years and has had many student teachers. He believes young and starting teachers in the state need the gift of a supervising teacher. Supervising teachers do not do it for the money. Conservatively, it takes two hours a day, if that student teacher has a ten week experience that means at least one hundred hours are needed, and that is the minimum. It is not hard to figure it

out, that is \$5.00 an hour if this bill becomes law. They do not do it for the money. Professionals want to help and this is a small token for something that is necessary. It is a token of appreciation for recognizing what is necessary in the teaching profession to move people into the profession. They need help. They need experience that they do not get in the classroom. It needs to be provided and they need mentoring.

Bob Vogel, MSBA, SAM, MREA, said he agrees with the testimony given. The discussion has been going on about this topic for more years than he realized. It has been discussed in Certification, Standards and Practices Advisory Council, in the Montana Commission on Teaching and a number of other commissions and groups that have gotten together and looked at this important issue. He has a daughter that was a student teacher and realizes how important it was for her to have a mentor. It is critical to have a high quality teacher who takes the time and care to make sure the student teachers develop into the high quality teachers that we need in the classroom.

Ginni McHugh said she teaches in an elementary school in Missoula. She has taught for 16 years in Montana and thoroughly enjoyed it. She represents classroom teachers from across the state of Montana in support of the bill. She used the analogy of a tree. The tree has four main parts; its roots, its trunk, its branches and its fruit. The roots are Montana's past and present education system. They are strong as can be seen by how well Montana students rank nationally. The trunk represents Montana's concerned parents and educators. The trunk is strong today, being comprised of caring parents and dedicated teachers. The branches are student teachers. These people have been educated in academic areas at our fine universities, but they won't learn how to bear fruit until they have done their student teaching with one of Montana's master teachers. The fruit is Montana's pride and joy, the children. The children are the product of an excellent education system. Each part of the tree is dependent on the legislature, the source of water and nutrients. The University of Montana has twelve main requirements of teachers willing to mentor a student teacher. These requirements include, but are not limited to, acquainting the student teacher with the curriculum, school facility, building requirements, resources and materials, machines, handbooks, schedules, schedules of meetings, schedules of duties and the requirements of those duties, allocating time for collaborating with administrators, special education personnel and teachers in other areas of expertise, and quoting from the University of Montana Student Teacher Handbook, "evaluating with the student teacher with daily or at least weekly conferences to plan teacher-teaching assignments or to confer on other pertinent topics that will help the student teacher greatly." Master teachers are asked to do this for \$100.

This is equal to about \$1.30 a day for hours outside the regular day. Many master teachers cannot and will not spend 160 hours beyond the regular semester mentoring student teachers for such low recompense. Please support **HB 297**.

Melodee Smith-Burreson said she had been teaching at the elementary level for 24 years. First she wanted to address the importance of keeping master teachers interested in training student teachers. During her 24 years of teaching she has worked with seven student teachers. She feels it is vitally important for her to take the opportunity to give back to the education field. What she wants to give back is something that was given to her 24 years ago, an opportunity to learn from a master teacher. She learned first-hand how to organize reading groups and field trips, how to teach the long vowel sound, and what to say to students when the class pet dies. She was able to participate in parent-teacher conferences and special education meetings for students with special needs. The invaluable experience that a student teacher receives while student teaching sets the stage for their career in teaching. Montana needs to continue to keep master teachers sharing their expertise with our future teachers. It is critical for our student teachers to be placed with dedicated, enthusiastic, knowledgeable master teachers who are willing to share their classroom experiences. With the current \$100 stipend, there is no financial incentive for master teachers to burden themselves with the substantial extra workload required to train young teachers. Her reason for participating in the student teacher program has never been money. The amount of time needed to supervise a student teacher has doubled since she supervised her first student teacher. With the increased demands on her time as a classroom teacher, she cannot continue to commit her time and energy without an increase in the stipend. The second area of importance that she wished to discuss was the number of hours in training a teacher and a dollar breakdown for compensation. The time spent working with a student teacher is beyond the seven hour day needed to teach one's own class. The student teacher is not on campus. The learning he receives is in the master teacher's classroom. It takes the master teacher at least three hours to complete the necessary forms for the student teacher. Montana will not keep master teachers if they continue to pay them a stipend of \$100.

Wayne Buchanan, BPE, said there is an impending teacher shortage in Montana. Part of the reason for this shortage is the added recruiting that is going on for Montana teachers by other states. A good percentage, perhaps two-thirds, of our teachers now leave Montana to teach elsewhere. A part of this recruiting scheme that the committee may not have heard of is in nearby states they offer the opportunity for our student teachers to come and do their student teaching. If Montana continues to have Montana

teachers that turn away student teachers, and if Montana increases the fees that are related to student teaching, then those opportunities to do student teaching out of state will become more attractive. The very best teachers will be recruited while the student teacher is out of state. It will exasperate our problem.

Bill Cooper, OPI, said the office he represents supports the bill.

Gregg Weisenstein, Dean of College of Education, Health and Human Development at Montana State University-Bozeman, said, on behalf of the **State Council of Deans of Education,** he is chairing a task force to study this problem of remuneration for supervising teachers with the full understanding that supervising teachers play a very critical role in the teacher preparation process and are considered an important, if not key, ingredient in the successful preparation of teachers for the state. For that reason, the State Council of Deans of Education has formed a task force with the various constituencies represented in this room to consider this problem. The task force was formed rather recently so it has not had an opportunity yet to develop its recommendations. He wished that the task force was in a position to forward the recommendations to the committee. He concurs with the comments that have been made in earlier testimony. He supports the bill. It is very much in keeping with the intent of his task force which, is to improve the remuneration for supervising teachers for the teacher candidates in Montana. He would encourage the committee to give serious and positive consideration to the bill.

Opponents' Testimony: None

Informational Testimony:

Joyce Scott, Deputy Commissioner for Higher Education for the Montana University System, said the concern that has been raised today is their concern also. It was raised about two years ago in an effort to revise the policy that dated to 1957. In December of 1999, that policy revision was approved and provided that each campus would decide upon appropriate recognition and a flat fee to be brought forward to the board of regents for review. At that time, based on campus input, they found that the need varies considerably from campus to campus. They have some concern with the idea that one size fits all is perhaps not the most efficient use of resources. It is appropriate to note that on the average of the past four years they have placed 1,772 student teachers in a two year period. In looking at the fiscal note, the \$700,000 is a little short. If there are 1,772

students that would require \$886,000 for a biennium. On behalf of the university system, she said they cannot fund the program, and if the legislature does not fund it, they cannot do it. In connection with the funding, they would recommend this be established as a statutory appropriation. They would not want to be in a situation where it is funded for two years and then not be able to continue to fund it. They recognize that there are other ways to compensate and recognize a supervising teacher's services and hope that this recently formed task force will ultimately give recommendations in that regard.

Questions from Committee Members and Responses:

REPRESENTATIVE JACKSON had a question for the **SPONSOR**. Is the \$700,000 in the fiscal note per year? The **SPONSOR** said the amount is for the biennium. **REPRESENTATIVE JACKSON** said he noticed that this is a new section. How would the \$100 per teacher be handled right now? The **SPONSOR** said right now the student teachers pay the \$100 and that is what is used to pay the supervising teachers. She assumed that would give some flexibility to the university system. If there were, as **Ms. Scott** said, more teachers to use this pool of money, then the \$100 from the student teacher could be used and increase the stipend, so that it might reach the intended \$500.

REPRESENTATIVE JACKSON had a question for **Dean Robson**. How does the program work for a student teacher? **Dean Robson** said that students enroll in student teaching and it varies from ten to twelve semester credits of enrollment. If they want to teach in a very specific place which is outside where the school might place teachers, then they are assessed an additional amount of money to cover that. The money that comes back for supervising teachers is used to pay university supervisors who go out to the schools and work with cooperating teachers, they also receive \$100. **REPRESENTATIVE JACKSON** asked **Mr. Robson** to describe a day of a student teacher's program. **Dean Robson** said some institutions have the student out in the field for twelve weeks and then back on campus for three weeks. Others have them out for all fifteen weeks. The student teacher is in the school full time.

REPRESENTATIVE MASOLO had a question for **Dean Robson**. When the students are doing student teaching, are they paying full tuition? The **Dean** answered yes. **REPRESENTATIVE MASOLO** asked where the extra money goes for the colleges, when they are paying that tuition. The **Dean** said it goes into the general fund, like

it always does. At the university there is a flat spot, after a certain number of credits, he believes it is twelve, a student pays the same fee up to 18 credits. **REPRESENTATIVE MASOLO** asked if there was any money in this tuition paid by student teachers, not on campus, that would go to paying the supervising teacher the stipend of \$500. The **Dean** said the university budget for student teaching, at present, runs about \$55,000. **REPRESENTATIVE MASOLO** asked what the \$55,000 was used for. The **Dean** said that is what the university has to pay cooperating teachers and supervisors and travel costs. **REPRESENTATIVE MASOLO** asked, is that for the \$100 to the supervising teacher and \$100 for the university supervising teacher? The **Dean** said that was correct.

REPRESENTATIVE BRANAE asked **Dean Robson** if they send some of their student teachers out of state, do the supervising teachers in other states accept the \$100? How does the program work in other states? The **Dean** said very few states pay more than \$100. It is very different all over the country. In some places there is no stipend pay. In some private institutions they pay much more than that amount. There is a lot of variation in what is done. Typically across the country, no one really tries to remunerate teachers for what is actually done.

REPRESENTATIVE LEHMAN had a question for **Dean Robson** also. When a student is doing student teaching, is he paying full tuition? **Dean Robson** said that each institution requires enrollment in a certain number of credits and generally speaking, this is a full semester load. **REPRESENTATIVE LEHMAN** said, so they are not on campus taking classes. **Dean Robson** said they come back for a student teaching seminar at some point. **REPRESENTATIVE LEHMAN** asked, part of their tuition then pays for the supervisory teacher to go out and check on the student teacher? **Dean Robson** said some of it does, but the tuition that a student pays all four years is part of the package. It is not broken down into what the student receives each semester.

REPRESENTATIVE LEHMAN had a question for the **SPONSOR**. If this proposal was to become law and the \$500 stipend went into effect, and you are talking about a \$700,000 appropriation for the biennium, there is language in the bill if the \$700,000 falls short. What if the opposite should occur? The **SPONSOR** said she would anticipate this could be put into a fund to save for future years when other teachers would be funded. She does not anticipate the teachers would be paid more than the \$500.

REPRESENTATIVE JACKSON had more questions for **Dean Robson**. Did you ever say what the cost of tuition is? **Dean Robson** said in state students pay about \$1400 a semester, or \$2800 a year.

REPRESENTATIVE JACKSON asked if the student being off campus and doing student teaching, is a requirement across the board? How does the student get all of his other teaching courses, when he spends a semester off campus? **Dean Robson** said student teaching turns out to be one half of the student's senior year. One of the things that happens is that there are students out in the field from the very beginning. They are in a early experience at the end of their sophomore year or the beginning of their junior year, which is observational and working with teachers as aids, etc. For every methods course that they take, there is a field component associated with it. If they take a methods course in mathematics, they are in the field working with the teacher learning specific methods in teaching mathematics. Then they go to a student teaching full time experience. The university has an easier time with elementary teachers when they prepare than they do with secondary teachers. Secondary teachers get less pedagogy and spend more time in their content area because they do a full content major and minor. **REPRESENTATIVE JACKSON** said he had a question about how this would be set up. You give an equal amount to every teacher and if you had your choice would you want to negotiate individually with the teachers you see in the field as the best teachers? **Dean Robson** said there are a number of new models that have been utilized across the country that they would like to consider. One is called the Professional Development School Model, which would actually have teaching methods courses in the school with master teachers for the student teacher. This would form much more of a partnership, but that is a much more intensive experience and it would require sharing resources. At this particular point, they are faced with a situation where if he has 200 student teachers, he has a person who is working full time contacting school districts around and saying, "will you take a student teacher?" The university accrediting agencies, in all the four-year institutions in Montana that have teacher preparation programs, are working very hard to be nationally accredited. Their accrediting agency is looking at fairly stringent standards for the field placement component and putting much greater stress on it than they ever have in the past. Some of them don't think that the university one semester program is enough and many programs are actually looking at a full year. **REPRESENTATIVE JACKSON** asked if the **Dean** would prefer to negotiate with individual teachers so that he would know that they would be there? **Dean Robson** said they have to anyway. They have a contract with each of the teachers with what they will do with the university's student teachers. Someone who teaches with the **Dean's** university program has a slightly different expectation in terms of the philosophy of teaching, etc., than someone from Bozeman or another campus. They have to have an arrangement with the individual teacher about the kinds of things they will do. They have tried over the

years to avoid getting into any sort of bidding war with other institutions about pay. They had some problems a few years back when a step grant, which was a science teaching grant of about six million dollars, came into the state and they set up what they called a model teaching situation and they paid \$1,000 per student teacher to the cooperating teachers in the sciences. That was federal money.

REPRESENTATIVE JACKSON questioned **Dean Weisenstein**. You mentioned that you have a study going on which is not ready yet. Do you have any preliminary information you would like to share?

Dean Weisenstein said they are just in the process of collecting some information about what other states do and what they have been able to collect thus far is fairly dated. It dates back to 1992. He would prefer to wait until the committee has had an opportunity to collect more current data and form some recommendations. The task force is comprised of people representing MEA, superintendents, teachers, deans, and others who have a vested interest in a student teaching process in the preparation of teachers. He would suspect that they would not be able to issue a set of recommendations for about a month or so.

REPRESENTATIVE JACKSON asked if some of the teachers out in the field do put in the 160 recommended hours, and if others might put in 30 hours? From your perspective, would it be a good idea to negotiate with a teacher that is willing to put the 160 hours into the program and pay him more? The **Dean** said that in concept that has merit, in practice it might be very difficult to implement. Without question, there are teachers who put in more than 160 hours and he thinks that would be the vast majority of the supervising teachers. There are some who put in less. They have a group that is called a partnership and that is made up of administrators and teachers, particularly their supervising teachers that meet with their field placement office two or three times a year and they discuss these issues and they stress the importance of the supervising teacher being with and available to the student teacher. There are times during the process that the student teacher has to have control of the classroom. That is part of the growth process. The supervising teacher is available to the student teacher in the event that the student teacher needs help or advice from the supervisor.

REPRESENTATIVE OLSON asked the **SPONSOR** if there is a fiscal note coming with this bill? The **SPONSOR** said she expected one today. She is assuming it will be the \$700,000 for the biennium with no other costs associated. **Connie Erickson** said that bills with appropriations in them do not come with fiscal notes. They only come with bills where there is no particular appropriation. The money is in the bill. **REPRESENTATIVE OLSON** asked the **SPONSOR** if this bill has been to appropriations? The **SPONSOR** said no, it

has not. **REPRESENTATIVE OLSON** said we all know what we are facing in the funding, is this money better spent here or would this money be better spent going into K-12 education? The **SPONSOR** said she believes this is money going into K-12 education. **REPRESENTATIVE OLSON** said he means money going into general fund education. The **SPONSOR** said, considering that this is talking about pay for teachers, which is definitely K-12 education, pay for perspective teachers and encouraging our master teachers to take on the responsibilities of mentoring tomorrow's fine teachers, then as she said before, she considers it K-12 funding. **REPRESENTATIVE OLSON** said he had to get deeper, like paying the electrical bills, gas bills, coal bills, the transportation bills, and other obligations, would this money be better off spent at the discretion of the local trustees to meet the district's obligations? The **SPONSOR** said, in her mind, there can be no finer investment than investing in the teachers that take care of 99% of the business of schools. The business of schools is to teach children, it is not to pay the bills.

REPRESENTATIVE PETERSON asked the **SPONSOR** if there is any thought about charging the student teacher an extra fee because there is an extra cost. When he went to college there was an extra fee because there was extra cost. The **SPONSOR** said the student teacher is already paying the \$100 that is going to the master teacher. Certainly, the cost could be raised. Right now the cost of their education is spread over four years, they could pay more for the 3 ½ years so we might be encouraging them to go to education schools in other states and take their teaching to other states too. That is possible, she wouldn't recommend it. The students are paying enough already.

Closing by Sponsor:

REPRESENTATIVE RASER said teaching is a noble profession. There is nothing like it. Nothing gives you the joy and the pleasure that teaching does, but intrinsic rewards are not always enough. These days we are facing increasingly tight salaries. This is one way that we can address the performance of master teachers and we can give them a bit more to say thank you for being a master teacher and thank you for passing on your expertise to tomorrow's teachers, as well. **REPRESENTATIVE JACKSON** raised legitimate concerns when he was talking about the supervising teachers who do not put in 160 hours. If we keep the stipend as it is now, she knows from her own experiences, the only people willing to take on these responsibilities are the ones that do less anyway. We know that kind of behavior is in every occupation. You have those who do more and those who do less. With the \$100 stipend we are not going to have our finest teachers mentoring. We will not get quality teachers. Governor

Martz said in her address that we need to find ways to reward the state's exemplary teachers. This is one way.

{Tape 1 :1; Side : B}

HEARING ON HB 140

Sponsor: GAY ANN MASOLO, HD 40, Townsend

Proponents: Arlene Hannawalt, Director of Montana Guaranteed
Student Loan Program

Bob Edwards, Associated Students, MSU
Amanda Brumfield, Association Students, MSU
Bill Cooper, OPI
Joyce A. Scott, OCHE
Sarah Cobler, Associated Students, UM
Dustin Stewart, Associated Students, UM
Jared R. Harris, Associated Student, MSU
Doug Shenkle, MEA-MFT
Jeff Hindoien, Government
Erik Burke, MEA-MFT
Bob Vogel, MSBA, SAM, MREA

Opponents: None

Opening Statement by Sponsor:

REPRESENTATIVE GAY ANN MASOLO, HD 40, Townsend, said she is bringing **HB 140** because in a few years she sees parents having a hard time paying for their children's education when they are still paying off their own education bills. Then she sees the state not having qualified teachers to teach their children. This was seen as a need by the governor's task force on teacher shortages. It looked at many of the problems the committee is hearing about. There are low salaries, low retention, recruitment, lack of induction and mentoring programs, retirement and post retirement. They were also to look over the large workloads and preparations and then the remoteness issues. That is what this bill attacks. It is a loan forgiveness proposal that is included in the governor's budget to cover the teachers who agree to teach in high demand and low supply areas. This is defined in terms of geographic areas and certification endorsement areas.

Proponents' Testimony:

Erik Burke, MEA-MFT, said he was on the task force that the **SPONSOR** talked about. He was with Governor Racicot's office

heading the task force which was trying to put together the recommendations that would impact Montana in a positive way and hopefully to allow all the districts in the state to be able to recruit and retain quality teachers in the classrooms. As it is today, representing MEA-MFT, he truly wished that he didn't need to be testifying to the committee. In Montana we are facing something that he doesn't think needed to be here. If adequate funding for our schools had been continued for the last ten years, we would not be seeing the teacher shortages and teacher retention problems that are being faced now. In Montana, after ten years of stagnant budget increases, declining enrollments, problems in maintaining the operating budgets within our districts, we are at a point where we struggling to even hire certified teachers to be in the Montana classrooms.

REPRESENTATIVE OLSON sat on the committee with him. His input as a school board member was particularly helpful to the committee as they talked about solutions. As a school board member, he has to look at who he can hire to fill his classrooms in his community. He told the committee of some of the comments received by the task force. One superintendent said he would like to hire quality teachers, but when you have one applicant, you feel like that person is interviewing you. Another said that he had teachers in his system that qualify for the free or reduced food program. What a shame. Another said that a high school science teacher left after four years in Montana to go to Michigan for a \$14,000 raise. He offered some statistics received in their committee. Currently Montana's teachers rank 48th in average salary. We are losing nearly 75% of our teacher education graduates to other states. Beginning teacher salaries in California and Nevada districts that recruit Montana first year teachers are twelve to twenty thousand dollars higher than those in some of our best paying districts, \$25,000 in some of our worse paying districts. The average student loan debt of Montana State University System's graduates is nearly \$17,000. Our teaching workforce is aging rapidly. Statewide, nearly one third of our teachers are expected to retire in the next five years. It is projected that there will be a need of 600 to 800 new teachers being required every year over the next five years as a result of those retirements. We have been at 400 or 500 new teachers per year. Montana districts are hiring an increasing number of uncertified and untrained staff to fill key teaching positions in special education, science, music and several other content areas. Finally, due to the limited state fund, declining enrollments and school districts general fund budget caps that we are presently experiencing, none of these things are likely to change or get better in the next few years. That is why he is sad to be present to have to talk about trying to provide \$3,000 per year incentives for Montana students to simply stay in Montana. This is a stop gap bandaaid measure, but at this point they feel this is one of the best options they have to keep

Montana schools staffed with quality, certified competent teachers. That is why his organization is supporting **HB 140**.

REPRESENTATIVE OLSON, HD 8, said he served on the governor's task force for teacher shortages. He said the task force opened a lot of eyes. This state is in a world of hurt. The state has a large percentage of its teachers eligible to retire. When they are gone, how will the positions be filled? National board certification was big on his list, well it didn't get funded. **HB 60**, which he sponsored, was a teacher scholarship program based along the same lines as this bill. He put that bill on hold because of the financial situation the state is in. He is not going to put the bill out there to compete for dollars. **HB 140** is included in the governor's budget and it's going to help all of Montana. He particularly likes line 29 which says, "The board of public education, in consultation with the office of public instruction, shall create and maintain a listing of geographic regions within the state that are experiencing critical teacher shortages." How many people will move their families to remote areas? Those places don't have the dollars and they cannot compete with larger cities like Billings. This bill will help in the role of hiring teachers and he urged a do pass out of this committee.

Arlene Hannawalt, Director for the Montana Guaranteed Student Loan Program said she deals directly with the recipients talked about in the bill. It is the responsibility of her organization to guarantee the loans for the students that are in the education system so they can pay for their education. It is also her responsibility to collect the loans from students if they do not pay. She presented statistics on college costs in Montana. She presented a sheet on minimum annual income levels needed for a student to be able to pay off his loan. **EXHIBIT(edh23a04)** She also offered written testimony. **EXHIBIT(edh23a05)**

Bob Vogel, MSBA, SAM, MREA, said that he would like to offer a couple of statistics. They went to school districts and asked if they had difficulties hiring staff for the past year. Forty-two of 52 districts responded they had difficulty in hiring certified staff, four districts noted that they had positions that they had not been able to fill. They asked the question, "Has your district experienced a decrease or increase in the number of applicants for open positions this past year?" Thirty-nine of 52 districts responded that they had a decrease in the number of applicants. Fifteen districts used the words "dramatic," or "significant" decreases in their response. A copy of the survey is available to anyone interested. The survey does demonstrate their strong concern about recruitment and retention of teachers.

Bill Cooper, OPI, said they were included on the governor's task force for teacher shortages and salaries. Members of the committee included teachers, school board members, representatives of the governor's office, and three legislators. They worked extremely hard to find solutions for the teacher retention and recruitment problems and the salary problems. They came up with eleven recommendations. They realized that the cost of many of those recommendations were just too much for the system to bear at this time. They pared it down to six. The six recommendations became part of the report to the governor. The governor accepted the report and put it in his budget. The new governor has included it in her budget. It looks like we only have one of those recommendations still with its head above water and this bill is the one. His office rises in strong support of the committee's consideration of this bill.

Doug Shankle said he represents teachers and parents with a vested interest in education in Montana. He speaks in strong favor of any incentive that can be offered to give the children of this state a quality education. It is the teachers involved with the children in the classroom that makes the difference. His son entered a Montana college with a desire to be a science teacher. He came from a family of teachers. He received scholarships with the intent of being an education major. Some of the scholarships were intended for a student majoring in education. He has switched majors. He is expected to take the science and mathematics courses for teaching just as he would take in the engineering program. He would also carry the same debt load. He is now in the engineering field. Montana has to offer some kind of incentive to keep its students in education and teaching in the state.

Sarah Cobler, Associated Students of the University of Montana, said they stand in strong support of the bill. This was one of the high points of the governor's budget. Loan repayment will help retain teachers in Montana.

REPRESENTATIVE DICK HAINES, HD 63, said he looks at the bill from two different directions. He looks at it like the military academies operate. If the student goes to their school and stays in the military group for four years, the government pays for the education. He realizes that the state cannot do this at that level. It triggered something, we need to give our students an incentive to stay in the state and we need to tell them why they should do it. A student going to college would recognize this as an opportunity. The debt reduction should make Montana salaries more competitive. The jobs aren't all going to be in big towns, like Missoula, Billings or Helena. There will be offers for jobs in small towns. It can be quite a change in lifestyle. Some

find that very disturbing and hard to deal with, but after they have been there a few years, they like it and don't want to leave. These people become a valuable part of the community as they become active in local government and organizations.

Wayne Buchanan, BPE, said the teacher shortage in Montana is real and it is serious. He said the legislature hears this every session. This is a serious problem and it will take a generation to correct it. At present we only see a decreased pool of teachers from which the districts are selecting their teachers. This is a modest bill, it is a small amount, but it is an incentive for teachers to teach in critical areas and in critical subject areas.

Amanda Brumfield, Associated Students of Montana State

University, said upon graduation she would like to teach in Montana. She has acquired a substantial amount of debt while attending school. When she looks at jobs in Montana and other states, she cannot afford to stay in Montana and pay off her debt. She supports **HB 140** and hopes she will get a chance to stay in Montana.

Gregg Weisenstein, Dean of College of Education, Health and Human Development at Montana State University-Bozeman, said that we have a national crisis in our teaching force. We have a national crisis because of the occupations that compete with teaching and provide such a difference in salary levels. We have a national crisis because of the age demographics of our teaching force. We have a national crisis in our teaching force because of the quality of life that can be obtained outside of the profession of teaching. The fact that we have a national crisis in our teaching force does not allow us to do something we've done in years past. We cannot effectively recruit from outside the state. The state of Colorado will have to replace 50% of its teachers in the next five years. Other states have similar kinds of problems. We can no longer look to other states to solve teacher shortages in Montana. Other states are coming to Montana and recruiting successfully in Montana, not only because they offer a better salary, but they are coming to Montana because of Montana kids. They are coming because of the work ethics of Montana kids, because of the values of Montana students, and because of the training that we provide students here in Montana. Other states are only successful recruiting his students because his students tell him they can retire part of their school debt that they accumulated as part of receiving certification to teach. It is not that our students want to leave the state of Montana and go to Southern California. Our students are quite committed to Montana and staying here to teach. In order to handle the debt that they have accumulated, they are forced to

look at jobs that pay considerably higher than those that are offered here in Montana.

REPRESENTATIVE LEHMAN, HD 87, Power, said he campaigned on behalf of this particular idea. He is impressed by one aspect of it and that is on the bottom of the first page in lines 29 and 30. He was superintendent at one time in Power. He was fortunate to be there because he was near a urban center. It was easy to hire teachers because of his location. Location is a problem in Montana. He hadn't realized that it was until he retired. The \$12,000 loan repayment in the bill would certainly be an incentive to go to isolated places in Montana. It is a good way of life.

Joyce Scott, OCHE, said her office supports the bill.

Bob Edwards, Associated Students of Montana State University, said that he is a junior at Montana State University-Bozeman and has acquired a substantial debt and he feels he may have to leave the state to afford payment on his debt. With **HB 140** he thinks he could stay in Montana, which is his home.

Jared Harris, Montana State University-Bozeman, said he is an engineering major. There is significant financial problem in a lot of students' lives, specifically due to low starting salaries in Montana, especially in education.

Dustin Stewart, Associated Students at Montana State University-Bozeman and Students at the College of Technology-Great Falls said he wanted to pass out a sheet that explains Montana Financial Aid program and college costs. **EXHIBIT (edh23a06)** This is from a student's prospective. He can guarantee that the \$12,000 loan repayment will help a student make up his mind to stay in Montana. It is a big deal with a student. A \$17,000 debt when a student leaves school is a big debt, but it becomes bigger when you realize that the average starting teacher salary in Montana is \$18,000. In 1999, Western graduated 167 students with a Bachelor's Degree. Of the 167 students, 124 were education majors. There is a recent study done by the commissioners office in which about half of the 167 graduates responded. Twenty-six percent of those responding had stayed in Montana. This is because when they stay in Montana they can't afford to pay back their loans. We want the best teachers in our classrooms. In critical shortage situations, a district may only have one applicant for the job. You don't have a choice about getting the best teacher. You get a teacher. There may be more applicants for that job if this bill is passed. You get a choice when you hire teachers. This bill will provide the best teachers for the children in Montana.

Jeff Hindoien, Governor's Office, said he is enthused by all the testimony and this bill is part of several measures that came out of the governor's task force. It remains in the executive budget. On behalf of the governor's office he asks for a do pass.

Opponents' Testimony: None

Questions from Committee Members and Responses:

REPRESENTATIVE WOLERY asked **Erik Burke** if he thought this bill will help the retirement problems looming in Missoula and Billings. **Erik Burke** answered that he could see that happening. There are certain certification areas that could be met with the help of this bill. OPI has room to move, and they can do that.

REPRESENTATIVE WOLERY asked **Erik Burke** if someone going to an isolated district could receive more of a payment on his student loan. **Erik Burke** said the bill is written in such a way that everyone gets the same amount of loan repayment under the guidelines established. It will be standardized.

REPRESENTATIVE JACKSON asked **Erik Burke** to give him more information on teachers' salaries. Can you give us some figures? **Erik Burke** said they use their figures from MEA-MFT which include all the schools they represent in the state. Based on those figures, the average teacher salary in Montana is \$32,500, and the average beginning salary is \$22,500. One thing to take into consideration is that because these are only districts they represent, they do eliminate many districts in the state. He didn't have the precise number, but typically there are some small districts where teachers do not belong to MEA-MFT and their salaries are lower than the figures quoted. **REPRESENTATIVE**

JACKSON said the last figure he saw might have been 1998 and it shows the average salary in Montana as \$37,000. Has Montana slipped or does he have an incorrect figure? **Erik Burke** said that he was not aware of that figure in any of his materials.

REPRESENTATIVE JACKSON asked **Erik Burke** if the money for the student loan program is borrowed from the state. **Erik Burke** said no, it is loaned through existing loan programs. **REPRESENTATIVE**

JACKSON asked if the loans carry an interest rate? **Erik Burke** said yes they do. **REPRESENTATIVE JACKSON** asked him to walk him through how this loan program works. **Erik Burke** said the student graduates from the university or college and becomes certified and becomes employed and meets the rest of the qualifications. At that point the teacher would take the statement from the loan company, or from their school, stating their full loan obligation. They would submit that to OPI who would confirm the certification status and that the person met the criteria of the program. OPI would send a check to the loan company as payment

for that student's loan obligation, up to \$3,000 a year.

REPRESENTATIVE JACKSON asked if at the end of four years, OPI would have sent \$12,000? **Erik Burke** said yes. **REPRESENTATIVE JACKSON** asked about a student that only owed \$8,000. **Erik Burke**, replied that the student would receive one fourth or \$2,000 repayment per year on his loan.

REPRESENTATIVE BIXBY had a question for **Erik Burke**. She asked what is to keep the teacher in Montana after he has the loan paid? **Erik Burke** said when they look at professions, when people start a career and stay four years, they are very likely to stay in that location, especially if they like where they are living. **REPRESENTATIVE BIXBY** asked, will the bill provide for that kind of data to be accumulated to see if the teachers do stay? **Erik Burke** said that was not requested in the bill, but it is a good suggestion.

REPRESENTATIVE GALVIN-HALCRO had more questions for **Mr. Burke**. In a student loan repayment program, she knows there is a new option available that if the student agrees to an electronic withdrawal from their account, the percentage rate that is accumulated each month goes down. With this program, will the \$3,000 be paid at the beginning of the year to assist the student to keep that percentage rate down, along with their electronic withdrawals to the repayment program? **Erik Burke** said this bill targets only principal obligation. In his mind this bill would not affect the interest rates. **REPRESENTATIVE GALVIN-HALCRO** asked if this payment would be made at the beginning of a school year, once the school contract was signed? **Erik Burke** said he cannot tell exactly when the payment would be made. The bill says sometime after October 15. **REPRESENTATIVE GALVIN-HALCRO** asked if that meant the payment could come sometime after October 15, of the year the student starts teaching and before the following October 15 of the next year? **Erik Burke** said he could assume that OPI would take this on an annual budget basis per fiscal year and would have to make the payment by June 30, of the next year. **REPRESENTATIVE GALVIN-HALCRO** asked if that meant it could be made at the end of the teacher's teaching year? That would not allow the greater assistance the student would receive if the payment was to be made at the beginning of the school year. **Erik Burke** said he understands what she is saying. They've given OPI the responsibility of establishing the administrative nature of how the bill will be administered. They did give OPI flexibility and he believes she makes some good points for them to consider.

REPRESENTATIVE ANDERSEN had a question for **Mr. Burke**. The chart given by **Ms. Hannawalt** has a section stating that \$17,000 is the average student loan upon graduation and states that the loan

repayment would be \$210 per month. This would amount to \$2,520 per year. Did you consider covering more than 110 students?

Mr. Burke said this goes back to what **REPRESENTATIVE GALVIN-HALCRO** was getting at. Traditionally, student loans are broken down over a ten-year period. What the task force did was try to front load as much as possible so the student can buy down the interest rate that he will be paying over time. Reducing the amount of money received by the teacher could reduce the incentive which is the purpose of the bill. **REPRESENTATIVE ANDERSEN** asked if the student would still owe money on his loan at the end of the four year period covered in the bill. **Mr. Burke** said yes.

REPRESENTATIVE BIXBY had a question for **Mr. Burke**. She said she is still concerned about keeping teachers in the state. On the reservation they have a very high turnover of teachers. They come and receive some training and then the teacher moves on. Is there a way to put in some assurance to keep the teachers longer, if they take advantage of this program? **Mr. Burke** said it is possible to put additional restrictions on this program or BPE might attempt to do so. He would advise against doing that. We think there is an incentive. Once a teacher is in his fourth year contract, he does have a tenure under current statute and that probably is significant to them, as well, in wanting to stay. Beyond that, they would not want to hold teachers where they do not want to be. That could be anywhere in the state of Montana. If the bill helps rural districts through a period where the teacher crisis is significant, down the road when it might not be so great, the teachers should be able to move on as they see fit.

Closing by Sponsor:

REPRESENTATIVE MASOLO stated that there is a small amendment that can be taken care of during executive action. It has to do with a technical point and also to add state youth correctional facilities to the bill. Today the committee did hear that two thirds of the teachers are leaving. She can testify as a supervising teacher of student teachers that she has seen many good teachers go to California. It broke her heart to see Montana lose them. They leave because of salary and loan debts. Other states want Montana students because of their values and work ethics

EXECUTIVE ACTION ON HB 272

REPRESENTATIVE OLSON moved that **HB 272 DO PASS.**

REPRESENTATIVE OLSON moved that the amendment for **HB 272 DO PASS**.

Discussion:

REPRESENTATIVE OLSON said the amendment takes out the amount of time for a student to be excused for religion training, and lets the school district decide how much time it is willing to release the student.

REPRESENTATIVE LEHMAN asked **REPRESENTATIVE OLSON** if the reference to one class period, per day, has been deleted by the amendment? **REPRESENTATIVE OLSON** said yes.

Motion/Vote: **REP. OLSON** moved that the **AMENDMENTS to HB 272 DO PASS**. Motion carried 18-0.

REPRESENTATIVE OLSON moved that **HB 272 DO PASS AS AMENDED**.

Discussion:

REPRESENTATIVE WOLERY asked **REPRESENTATIVE OLSON** to explain the amendments to him. **REPRESENTATIVE OLSON** said what they are doing is deleting the references to time and trustee shall determine the amount of time for which a pupil may be released.

REPRESENTATIVE WOLERY asked if they were taking out the two hours a week that are in statute now? **REPRESENTATIVE OLSON** said yes.

REPRESENTATIVE LEHMAN said he was not pleased with the amount of time that the original bill would have allowed. He is more comfortable with leaving this as a local control issue and putting the responsibility on the local board of trustees to determine exactly what amount of time they want to provide. He said he would urge a do pass.

REPRESENTATIVE FRITZ said that **REPRESENTATIVE OLSON**, in his closing remarks, asked, "Is it good for Montana? Yes, it is. Is it good for the parents? Yes, it is. Is it good for the school? Yes, it is. It gives those kids one more option." She wanted to point out that what we have forgotten here is: Is it good for the student? She believes, as a teacher in a secondary high school, that our high schools offer the first opportunities for students to come and practice becoming citizens in our society today. They bring with them, the values of their family and the values of their church, but its their opportunity to dive in and become the person they are going to be in future society, to test themselves in the water of society, not just in the family, not just in the church. She thinks that opportunity is very important. In her high school in Missoula they have a large

number of Mormon students. For many years, when she was teaching those Mormon students, many of them came to her class because she taught Spanish and they were getting ready for their missions. By in large, they floated with the rest of the students and became very good leaders in student government, in choir, in athletics and all phases of the school. In the last two years that she was teaching, a small group of Mormon students came together in kind of a social gathering and they drew taunting, they drew remarks, they even drew physical bullying from some other students in the school. At that time she stepped in and said the Mormon Church should be told what was happening. The administration did not agree. She believes the students had a right to come together as Mormon students and be recognized in the school, but the rest of the Mormon students were not taken out of the school one period of the day and set aside from the rest of the student body. The parents didn't come into the class with the students. The parents weren't able to follow them in. They could follow them to church and in the family. Students deserve every chance to become part of the society without being set apart by their parents at that time. You refer to this as a board option. If it is a board option, it is no longer a student option. The students don't have a choice.

REPRESENTATIVE WALTER said he would disagree with that. Parents should have that option. It is the parents that decide for a child. Children don't know what is best for them. As they grow up you give them more and more freedom, but there are some things that he is not willing to give up with his seventeen-year-old child. As far as being taunted, he has a Native American daughter who has been taunted in her school and she has gotten tougher. He likes the bill and will vote for it.

REPRESENTATIVE JACKSON said that he has taught in schools that had a release period and allowed the kids to go for religious training. He hopes that is what they did. He is comfortable to vote for the bill as amended. Students do have spiritual needs that need to be met. He has found that kids who were given extra time for religious instruction had absolute values. Kids need absolute values. With the tremendous problems that are in school now, there are many, schools have responded to this by hiring more counselors. As a teacher, he utilized churches to help with the counseling. It gives teachers another source of counseling for students. There isn't enough help for the students in conflict.

REPRESENTATIVE BRANAE stated that faith is important in a person's life and he believes it can help the individual grow. He still has to question if this should be taken care of during school time. He looks at what we have asked the schools to do and there is such an important push now for accountability, and

he believes the teachers have a tough time trying to cover what they should in the time that they have. If students are released, it is going to make the job of the teachers to provide the academics tougher. He will have to vote no.

REPRESENTATIVE ANDERSEN said she knows that the job of the teacher is tough. When she was growing up the school activities that she had available to her didn't take all the time that school activities take now. In our small schools, there is a night set aside, but there are practices that are held by athletic teams. By the time the student is done with dinner and homework, he won't have time for an outside activity. In the small communities, they have a hard time maintaining membership in local civic organizations. This bill might strike some balance for the students to have time to participate in a spiritual organization and contribute to their community. She supports the bill. She likes the amendment that was put on it.

REPRESENTATIVE PETERSON stated that in his packet of bills not acted on is **HB 265**. It is called a running start. It encourages kids to go to college while they are going to high school. He said he doesn't see the difference. Kids who are going to religious training are being taught character, integrity, honesty, moral values, and all of these types of things that they can use to influence other students. When he campaigned he went around to doors and there are a lot of home school people. They asked him what his position was on home schooling. He said he told them he was against it. Why? I said the reason I am against it is, the people who home school are some of the best people that we have. Some of the strongest character, moral, and honest people are home schooled children. Those kids ought to be in school trying to influence the other students. Some even agreed with him. He sees a student preparing for registration in school, bringing a parental slip allowing the student a period a day for religious instruction. The student looks at his schedule and figures out what classes are available, whether it is a study hall or an elective period and then the student can decide to use that period for religious instruction. He believe this will only work if the religious instruction is close to the school. After the religious instruction the student goes back to school and may discuss what he has covered with his friends. There are eleven states in the west, Montana being one of them, that provide for released time. Ten of the eleven have on-going programs of released time for religious instruction during school hours. More than 500 local school boards have given approval and enjoyed the benefits of this program. There is no reason not to allow a local school board this option and it can only benefit the participants.

REPRESENTATIVE GALVIN-HALCRO said she is a teacher and a product of a private Catholic education. Her children went to public schools. For them it was a matter of choice, each and every one of them participated in extracurricular activities. Each of them chose to go to their religious education classes on Wednesday night. Each of them graduated in the top portion of their classes. One of them attended Carroll College in Helena. It was her choice. One just graduated from Montana State University in Bozeman. It was her choice. The last one is a sophomore in Gonzaga in Washington. It is her choice to be there. They chose to participate in the activities that were essential to them and religious education classes were essential to them and they are better people for it. They did it on their own time.

REPRESENTATIVE OLSON said he has been involved in public education since 1990. During his ten years on the school board he has had the opportunity to travel all over the country. One of the things that has hurt public education is that those who are involved in it can't seem to get outside of this box. That has hurt the system deeply. In Roundup they have allowed home school kids to come into their system for one class period or two or more, provided they had room for them and the trustees had the discretion to allow them in the school. This is the opportunity for some of the kids that are in that system to go the other way. Look at it as an elective, they won't get any credit for it. He sees reservation schools being able to take advantage of this program. Their culture means a lot to them. We need to make the opportunities available. We need to get out of the box. He sees the bill as letting that happen.

REPRESENTATIVE WOLERY called for the question.

Motion/Vote: REP. OLSON moved that HB 272 DO PASS AS AMENDED.
Motion passed 11-7 with Bixby, Branae, Fritz, Galvin-Halcro, Jacobson, Mangan, and Musgrove voting no.

ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment: 5:47 P.M.

REP. BOB LAWSON, Vice Chairman

NINA ROATCH, Secretary

GM/NR

EXHIBIT (edh23aad)